

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 10-27 are pending in the application, with claims 10 and 19 being the only independent claims. Claim 10 has been amended. Support for the claim amendments can be found in paragraph [0019] of the specification originally filed. New claims 19-27 have been added, which correspond to claims 10-18.

Reconsideration of the application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Rejection of the Claims over Prior Art

Claims 10-12, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kabout* (USP 5,712,516) in view of *Karita* (USP 4,876,765).

Claims 13, 14 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kabout* in view of *Karita*, and further in view of *Tucker* (USP 3,105,272).

Claims 13-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kabout* in view of *Karita*, and further in view of *Redman* (USP 5,070,575).

Subject Matter Described in the Specification

Before discussing the cited prior art and the Examiner's rejections of the claims in view of that art, a brief description of the subject matter described in the present application is deemed appropriate to facilitate understanding of the following arguments for patentability. The description is not meant to argue unclaimed subject matter.

The present application discloses a stabilizing arrangement for a drive carriage of a sliding door which is movable by a linear drive and the sliding leaf is suspended by magnetic forces. According to an embodiment of the present invention, the linear drive 1 includes a stationary guide rail 3 which is mounted in a holder 2 and a guide carriage 4 which is displaceable in the guide rail 3 (see paragraph [0017]; and Fig. 1 of the application as originally

filed). The guide rail has C-shaped slide rails 6 which are spaced apart with their open sides facing away from one another (see paragraph [0018]; and Fig. 1). A portion of the guide carriage 4 is located between the slide rails 6 and coils 7 are arranged on oppositely facing open sides of the C-shaped slide rails 6 (see paragraph [0018]; and Fig. 1). A sliding door 5 is connected to the guide carriage 4 (see, e.g., Figs. 10-13) so that the sliding door 5 is movable in the direction of the guide rail 3.

The guide carriage 4 includes a supporting rail 10 connected to a holding member 12 (see paragraph [0019], and Fig. 2). The magnets 13 and the coils 7 form a holder and a drive for the sliding door 5 (see paragraph [0019]).

Patentability of the Invention

Independent claim 10 recites, *inter alia*, that “said permanent magnets and said coils form a holder so that the guide carriage, with the fixed door leaf, is partially suspended by a magnetic force between said permanent magnets and said coils” and “the same permanent magnets and coils form a linear drive for the door leaf so that the guide carriage can be driven along said guide track by said magnetic force.” Support for the above claim features can be found in paragraph [0019] of the specification originally filed. According to independent claim 10, the permanent magnets and the coils are operable to both suspend and linearly drive the door.

The above recited claim features of independent claim 10 are not taught by *Kabout*, *Karita*, or the combined teachings thereof.

Kabout teaches a sliding door arrangement, in which a guide plate (11) is provided to interact with magnets (10) to lift the weight of the door panel (1) (*see*, col. 2, ll. 16-21). In addition, the sliding door arrangement of *Kabout* has a stator element (15), which operates to enable reciprocal movement of the door panel (1). The stator element (15) includes windings

(18), each of which can be actuated separately by a voltage to drive the door panel (1) (*see*, col. 2, ll. 23-25 and 33-34 of *Kabout*).

However, *Kabout* does not teach that the stator element (15) can operate to lift the weight of the door panel (1). In contrast, the sliding door arrangement of *Kabout* employs magnets (10) and a guide plate (11), which interact with each other to lift the weight of the door panel (1) (*see*, col. 2, ll. 16-21). There is no teaching in *Kabout* that the magnets (10) and the stator element (15) form both “a holder” and “a linear drive” for respectively suspending and linearly driving the door panel (1), as do “said permanent magnets and said coils” recited in independent claim 10. Accordingly, *Kabout* does not teach the above claim features of independent claim 10.

Karita teaches using permanent magnets (131, 132) to produce magnetic attractive force exerted on a magnetic guide member (105) to support at least part of the weight of the door (101). The door (101) is driven by a separate drive mechanism (140) including coils (147) (*see*, col. 4, ll. 19-45 of *Karita*). Therefore, the door (101) in *Karita* is suspended and linearly driven by separate mechanisms. Accordingly, *Karita* does not teach or suggest the same magnets and coils as both a suspension mechanism and a linear drive for the door panel, as recited in independent claim 10.

Since both *Karita* and *Kabout* describe separate elements for providing a suspension force and a linear drive, the combination of *Karita* and *Kabout* fail to teach or suggest that “said permanent magnets and said coils form a holder so that the guide carriage, with the fixed door leaf, is partially suspended by a magnetic force between said permanent magnets and said coils,” and that “the same permanent magnets and coils form a linear drive for the door leaf so that the guide carriage can be driven along said guide track by said magnetic force”, as expressly recited in independent claim 10.

In view of the above, independent claim 10 patentably distinguishes over the cited art. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of independent claim 10 and its dependent claims 11-18 is hereby respectfully requested.

Similar to independent claim 10, new independent claim 19 recites that “said permanent magnets and said coils being operable to generate a magnetic force for at least partially suspending the guide carriage and linearly driving the guide carriage along said guide track.” Accordingly, new independent claim 19 and its dependent claims 20-27 are allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 10 is allowable.

Conclusion

Based on all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action to this effect and early passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate reaching a resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,
COHEN PONTANI LIEBERMAN & PAVANE LLP

By /Alfred W. Froebrich/
Alfred W. Froebrich
Reg. No. 38,887
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

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